

Salvias That Thrive in the Humid South












I first fell in love with salvias while traveling out west several years ago. The botanical gardens of the western states are ablaze with a dazzling selection of salvias; I soon had an intense desire to grow every type of salvia I could find. I sent my clothes back in a box and filled my suitcase with great salvia finds I lucked up on, while visiting nurseries along the way. On arriving home I planted my new found selections with loving care, and watched with great anticipation as they settled into their new home. Some did ok, some just flat-out died. I wondered what went wrong; all my selections had been noted on the tag to do well in zone 9. Little did I know that zone 9 western US is a whole lot different than zone 9 eastern US. As the summer heat and humidity progressed, I watched as most of my new found treasures slowly met their demise.






I'm pretty stubborn when it comes to getting success in the garden with a new group of plants, so I did some research and began to find out which ones would thrive in our hot, steamy climate. I discovered a great book on salvias "The New Book of Salvias: Sages for Every Garden" by Betsy Clebsch. It turns out that we have a pretty good range of salvias that tolerate our climate, and even some that are native here. If you get the right ones, they are sturdy, long lived perennials in our gardens. They are great nectar sources for pollinator insects, and offer long season color when most of the other perennials have given it up in the heat. Many are deer proof, and some do best in shady wet spots. They come in a wide range of sizes and



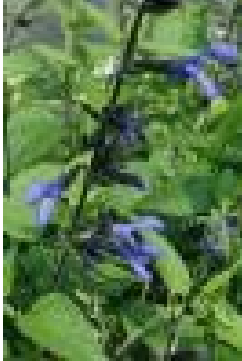





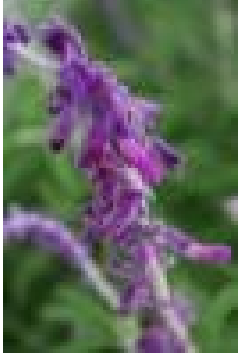
heights, from the low six inch edger "Maynight", *Salvia nemorosa*, to tall eight foot back ground grower "Yellow Forsythia Sage", *Salvia madrensis*. I find my summer bouquets to be filled with salvias as the color range is wide; yellow, red, blue and whites. Here's a list of what are the sure fire winners:



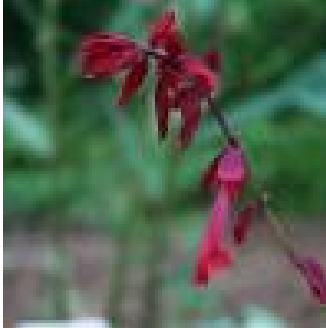
Salvia coccinea	COMMON NAME	VARIETIES	DESCRIPTION	QUALITY	BLOOM SEASON
	Red Tropical Sage	<i>Salvia coccinea</i> 'Lady in Red'	12-24", non-stop bloomer, red and pink tubular flowers, reseeding annual	Butterfly Nectar Plant Deer Resistant Hummingbird Attractor Native Florida Species Plant Salt Tolerant	Spring, Summer and Fall
	White Tropical Sage	<i>Salvia coccinea</i> 'Snow Nymph'	24-30", square stemmed, opposite light green leaves, spikes of white flowers all during warm weather, reseeding annual	Same as above	Spring, Summer and Fall
	Forest Fire Salvia	<i>Salvia coccinea</i> 'Forest Fire'	12-24", non-stop red tubular flowers with black bracts, reseeding annual	Same as above	Spring, Summer and Fall
	Pink Tropical Sage	<i>Salvia coccinea</i> 'Coral Nymph'	24-30", salmon-pink and white blooms, reseeding annual	Same as above	Spring, Summer and Fall





Salvia elegans	COMMON NAME	VARIETIES	DESCRIPTION	QUALITY	BLOOM SEASON
	Pineapple Sage	<i>Salvia elegans</i>	2-3ft, low mounding habit, striking scarlet flowers, light green fragrant Leaves	Butterfly Nectar Plant Fragrant Flowers or Foliage	Spring and Summer
	Honeydew Pineapple Sage	<i>Salvia elegans</i> 'Honeydew' <i>Pineapple</i>	Shorter, stockier, and earlier blooming than pineapple sage, heart-shaped leaves, red bloom, sweet melon scent	Same as above	Spring and Summer
Salvia farinacea	COMMON NAME	VARIETIES	DESCRIPTION	QUALITY	BLOOM SEASON
	Augusta Duelburg Sage	<i>Salvia farinacea</i> 'Augusta Duelberg'	3ft x 3ft, tough Texas native with spikes of white flowers from spring until frost, more floriferous and taller than other farinacea cultivars, found by Greg Grant in a small central Texas cemetery	Butterfly Nectar Plant Deer Resistant	Spring, Summer and Fall
	Blue Victoria Sage	<i>Salvia farinacea</i> 'Victoria Blue'	16-18", intense violet-blue 12" compact bloom spikes, dense dark green foliage	Same as above	Spring, Summer and Fall
	Evolution Mealy Cup Sage	<i>Salvia farinacea</i> 'Evolution'	14-18", best Mealy Cup Sage, more compact and better branching, violet-purple blooms are less susceptible to fading, attractive to bees and butterflies, 2006 All-America selection	Same as above	Spring, Summer and Fall




	Henry Duelberg Sage	<i>Salvia farinacea 'Henry Duelberg'</i>	3ft x 3ft, tough Texas native with spikes of showy blue flowers from spring until frost, more floriferous and taller than other cultivars with bluer flowers, found by Greg Grant in a small central Texas cemetery	Same as above	Spring, Summer and Fall
	Victoria Mealy Cup Sage	<i>Salvia farinacea 'Victoria' Series</i>	16-18", intense violet-blue 12"compact bloom spikes, dense dark green foliage	Same as above	Spring, Summer and Fall
Salvia greggii	COMMON NAME	VARIETIES	DESCRIPTION	QUALITY	BLOOM SEASON
	Pink Autumn Sage	<i>Salvia greggii 'Pink'</i>	2-3ft, compact, fine leaves, pink flowers, extremely cold and drought tolerant, ever blooming	Butterfly Nectar Plant Deer Resistant, Hummingbird Attractor, Xeric	Spring, Summer, Fall and Winter
	Mesa Sage	<i>Salvia greggii 'Mesa' TM Series</i>	18-24" X 14-16", loose mounding habit, fine aromatic leaves, drought tolerant, ever blooming with scarlet, rose, lavender or purple flowers	Same as above	Spring, Summer, Fall and Winter
	Coral Autumn Sage	<i>Salvia greggii 'Coral'</i>	2-3ft, compact, fine leaves, abundant coral flowers all season long, very cold and drought tolerant	Same as above	Spring, Summer, Fall and Winter

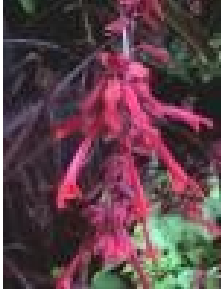


Salvia guaranitica	COMMON NAME	VARIETIES	DESCRIPTION	QUALITY	BLOOM SEASON
	Sapphire Sage	<i>Salvia guaranitica</i> 'Sapphire Sage'	5ft, dark green foliage, deep blue flowers on spikes, Florida Plant of the Year 2001	Butterfly Nectar Plant, Cuttable Flower or Foliage, Deer Resistant, Hummingbird Attractor	Spring, Summer and Fall
	Purple Majesty Sage	<i>Salvia guaranitica</i> 'Purple Majesty'	3ft, dark green leaves with dark purple blooms	Same as above	Spring, Summer and Fall
	Black and Blue Sage	<i>Salvia guaranitica</i> 'Black and Blue'	4-5ft, clumps of fuzzy green, spade-shaped foliage, topped with 1" long royal blue flowers with black calyces	Same as above	Spring, Summer and Fall
	Argentine Sky Sage	<i>Salvia guaranitica</i> 'Argentine Sky'	4-5ft sprawly shoots with medium green leaves, topped by pale blue tubular flowers	Same as above	Spring, Summer and Fall




Salvia leucantha	COMMON NAME	VARIETIES	DESCRIPTION	QUALITY	BLOOM SEASON
	Santa Barbara Sage, Dwarf Mexican Sage	<i>Salvia leucantha</i> 'Santa Barbara' PP12943	2-3ft, compact form of Mexican Sage with smaller leaves and internodes, typical dark purple fuzzy blooms	Butterfly Nectar Plant, Cuttable Flower or Foliage, Deer Resistant, Hummingbird Attractor	Spring, Summer and Fall
	Mexican Sage, Velvet Sage	<i>Salvia leucantha</i> 'Purple on White'	4-5ft, wooly purple and white blooms with fuzzy grayish leaves, drought tolerant, Florida Plant of the Year 2001	Same as above	Spring, Summer and Fall
	Mexican Sage, Velvet Sage	<i>Salvia leucantha</i> 'Purple on Purple'	4-5ft, wooly purple blooms with fuzzy grayish leaves, drought tolerant	Same as above	Spring, Summer and Fall


Salvia longispicata X farinacea	COMMON NAME	VARIETIES	DESCRIPTION	QUALITY	BLOOM SEASON
	Mystic Spires Blue Salvia	<i>Salvia longispicata X farinacea 'Mystic Spires'</i>	14-18", dwarf version of 'Indigo Spires', well-branched, extremely free-flowering, dark gray-green foliage, true blue flowers on 10" stalks cover the plant	Butterfly Nectar Plant, Cuttable Flower or Foliage, Deer Resistant, Hummingbird Attractor, Salt Tolerant, Xeric	Spring, Summer and Fall
Salvia madrensis	COMMON NAME	VARIETIES	DESCRIPTION	QUALITY	BLOOM SEASON
	Forsythia Sage	<i>Salvia madrensis</i>	6ft, soft yellow flowers on 12" spires atop unusually large square stems	Butterfly Nectar Plant, Cuttable Flower or Foliage, Xeric	Fall
Salvia miniata	COMMON NAME	VARIETIES	DESCRIPTION	QUALITY	BLOOM SEASON
	Belize Sage	<i>Salvia miniata</i>	5ft, dark red bloom, foliage will have bronze color and bloom better in more sun	Butterfly Nectar Plant, Hummingbird Attractor, Cuttable Flower or Foliage, Deer Resistant	Spring and Summer

Salvia nemorosa	COMMON NAME	VARIETIES	DESCRIPTION	QUALITY	BLOOM SEASON
	Caradonna Sage	<i>Salvia nemorosa</i> 'Caradonna'	18", violet-purple flowers with glowing purple stems, from Beate Zillmer of Zillmer Pflanzen in Germany	Butterfly Nectar Plant, Hummingbird Attractor, Butterfly Nectar Plant, Cuttable Flower or Foliage,	Spring, Summer and Fall
	Blue Salvia	<i>Salvia nemorosa</i> 'May Night'	18-24", blue-violet flowers - 1997 PPA Perennial Plant of the Year	Same as above	Spring, Summer and Fall
	Snow Hill Salvia	<i>Salvia nemorosa</i> 'Snow Hill' (Schneehugel)	18", compact habit, problem-free, a white flowered sport of 'Blue Hill', reblooms well when cut back	Same as above	Spring, Summer and Fall
Salvia officinalis	COMMON NAME	VARIETIES	DESCRIPTION	QUALITY	BLOOM SEASON
	Broadleaf Sage	<i>Salvia officinalis</i> 'Berggarten'	12-15", like garden sage but with broader leaves, tolerates wet weather better than other varieties	Fragrant Flowers or Foliage, Medicinal, Edible Spice	Spring and Summer

Salvia splendens	COMMON NAME	VARIETIES	DESCRIPTION	QUALITY	BLOOM SEASON
	Red Hot Sally Salvia	<i>Salvia splendens</i> 'Red Hot' Sally	10-12", brilliant red 5" blooms, extra long blooming time, dark green foliage	Butterfly Nectar Plant, Hummingbird Attractor	Spring, Summer and Fall
	Vista Salvia	<i>Salvia splendens</i> 'Vista' Series	10-12", light green foliage, clear green stems, 8" blooms - available in white and red	Same as above	Spring, Summer and Fall
Salvia uliginosa	COMMON NAME	VARIETIES	DESCRIPTION	QUALITY	BLOOM SEASON
	Bog Sage	<i>Salvia uliginosa</i>	3-6ft, light green leaves, heavier older stems lay over, small sky-blue tubular flowers, likes moist locations	Aquatic or Wetland Plant, Butterfly Nectar Plant, Cuttable Flower or Foliage, Deer Resistant	Spring, Summer and Fall

Salvia vanhoutteii	COMMON NAME	VARIETIES	DESCRIPTION	QUALITY	BLOOM SEASON
	Burgundy Sage , Wine Sage	<i>Salvia vanhoutteii</i>	3-4ft, light green foliage, unusual burgundy colored blooms, drought tolerant, long-blooming	Butterfly Nectar Plant, Cuttable Flower or Foliage, Hummingbird Attractor, Xeric	Spring, Summer and Fall
	Dancing Flame Salvia	<i>Salvia vanhoutteii</i> 'Dancing Flame'	2-3ft, yellow splotched foliage, flower is similar to annual red salvia in appearance, bright orange-red blooms, drought tolerant, long-blooming	Same as above	Spring, Summer and Fall
	Faye Chapel Salvia	<i>Salvia vanhoutteii</i> 'Faye Chapel'	2-3ft, light green foliage, similar to annual red salvia in appearance, bright red blooms, drought tolerant, long-blooming	Same as above	Spring, Summer and Fall

Salvia X 'Indigo Spires'	COMMON NAME	VARIETIES	DESCRIPTION	QUALITY	BLOOM SEASON
	Blue Salvia	<i>Salvia X 'Indigo Spires'</i>	3-4ft, long spikes of deep blue flowers, gray-green foliage, responds well to pruning, Florida Plant of the Year 2001	Butterfly Nectar Plant, Cuttable Flower or Foliage, Deer Resistant, Hummingbird Attractor	Spring, Summer and Fall
Salvia X 'Maraschino'	COMMON NAME	VARIETIES	DESCRIPTION	QUALITY	BLOOM SEASON
	Maraschino Sage	<i>Salvia X 'Maraschino'</i>	30" tall, makes 3ft wide clumps, narrow green foliage, blooms heaviest in spring and fall, bright cherry-red flowers, cross between <i>S. grahamii</i> and <i>microphylla</i>	Butterfly Nectar Plant, Cuttable Flower or Foliage, Deer Resistant, Hummingbird Attractor, Xeric	Spring, Summer and Fall
Salvia X 'Wendy's Wish'	COMMON NAME	VARIETIES	DESCRIPTION	QUALITY	BLOOM SEASON
	Wendy's Wish Sage	<i>Salvia X 'Wendy's Wish'</i>	3ft x 3ft, chance seedling selection found in Victoria, Australia, leaves have serrated margins, dark maroon stems hold unique tubular purple-red flowers with pinkish brown calyxes and fluted tips, blooms spring to fall, hardy to 25F, a portion of each sale goes to Make-a-Wish Foundation	Butterfly Nectar Plant, Deer Resistant, Hummingbird Attractor, Xeric	Spring, Summer and Fall

Salvia X microphylla	COMMON NAME	VARIETIES	DESCRIPTION	QUALITY	BLOOM SEASON
	Hot Lips Salvia	<i>Salvia X microphylla</i> <i>'Hot Lips'</i>	24-30", fast-growing clumper, small leaves, bicolor flowers are white with red lips in cool weather, mostly red in summer and occasionally all white	Butterfly Nectar Plant, Deer Resistant, Hummingbird Attractor, Xeric	Spring, Summer and Fall